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ABSTRACT

This study examines research related to factors which influence achievement at the kindergarten level. It also attempts to increase awareness of kindergarten programs which make a child's first experience in school a positive one. The main portion of this paper consists of an annotated bibliography of 34 references divided into four sections. The first examines preschool experiences and their influence on kindergarten achievement. The focus is on the formal preschool program and alternative child care programs. The second section concentrates on parental influence on children's later achievement. Literary interest and language development are two positive effects on later school achievement that result from the influence of the home environment. The third section focuses on schedule effects on kindergarten achievement. Half-day everyday, full-day everyday, full-day alternate-day, and other schedules are compared for significant differences in achievement, classroom behavior, attendance, and long-term effects in elementary school. The fourth section discusses aspects of curriculum. Developmental placement and transition room achievements are noted. The paper concludes with a summary of the research, conclusions, and three recommendations based on the results. (RJC)

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FOUR AREAS OF INFLUENCE WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study	3
Organization of the Study	3
Definition of Terms	4
ANNOTATIONS	6
Factors Influencing Kindergarten Achievement	6
Formal Preschool	6
Alternative Child-Care Arrangements	8
Teacher Attitudes	9
Various Testing Methods	11
Early Entry	14
Parental Influence	15
Maternal Involvement	15
Home and School Relationships	16
Kindergarten Scheduling	18
Kindergarten Offerings	18
Full-Day: Nonsupportive	19
Full-Day: Supportive	21
Curriculum	26
Developmental Placement	26
Transition Room and Classroom Skills	28
SUMMARY	30
CONCLUSIONS	38
RECOMMENDATIONS	41
LIMITATIONS	42
BIBLIOGRAPHY	43

INTRODUCTION

Since 1974, the opportunity to attend kindergarten in the United States has changed from a privilege to a right- or, in some states, even a requirement. (Robinson, 1987, p.23). Today's emphasis on the advantages of early childhood education has stimulated some states to hire explicit coordinators for kindergarten programming. (Robinson, 1987, p.23). What is the major purpose of the kindergarten program and what influences the achievement of the kindergarten child? The philosophies of most leaders in kindergarten education are that of preparing materials, offering inservice help, and fostering grants within their state: all of these moving toward the priorty of a "balanced" kindergarten program. (Robinson, 1987, p.24).

The kindergarten classroom emphasizes socialization. (Swartz and Walker, 1984, p.216). Five-year-olds enter school with varied experiences and expectations. Some are quite familiar with academic preschool experiences, others come in ready to test their environment for compatibility. Recently there has been much interest in whether half-day kindergarten schedules are adequate enough to prepare children for the first grade. (Helmich, 1985, p.1). However, there is more to be considered in changing a school system's kindergarten schedule than statistical data. (Robertson, 1984, p.24).

Parental involvement in informal strategies is

considered to be positively related to a child's academic performance by most researchers and parents. This hypothesis, however, has not been confirmed. (Lopez and Holmes, 1983, p.250). Literary interest, when fostered early in a child's home environment, does however have a positive relationship with early reading skills. (Morrow, 1983, p.227).

Five-year-olds are naturally curious and they need to engage in direct and concrete experiences in order for them to formulate new ideas and new concepts. Developmental placement curriculum matches the readiness of the kindergarten child in order for the greatest and most beneficial amount of learning to occur. (Jaworski and Riley, 1985, p.3).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

School competence incorporates the classroom teacher as a partner in the evaluation of young children's abilities. (Swartz and Walker, 1984, p.209). Teachers have the unique opportunity to observe a wide range of behaviors during their time in the classroom. If the factors influencing kindergarten achievement can be given careful consideration to meet all the needs of children - social, emotional, cognitive, and physical - then it is reasonable to expect children to have a positive first experience in school. (Robinson, 1987, p.25).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to examine the factors which influence achievement at the kindergarten level. The purpose was also to increase an awareness of those kindergarten programs which successfully make a child's first experience in school a positive endeavor.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The first part of the study has dealt with preschool experiences and their influence on kindergarten achievement. The focus has been upon the formal preschool program along with the alternative child-care programs.

The second part of the study has focused around parental influence on later achievement. Literary interest and language development are two positive effects coming from the home environment on later school achievement.

The third part of the study has focused entirely on schedule effects on kindergarten achievement. Various schedules, half-day everyday (HDED), full-day everyday (FDED), and full-day alternate-day (FDAD), were discussed and compared for significant differences in achievement, classroom behavior, attendance, and long-term effects in later grades of elementary school.

The fourth and final part of the study has dealt with various curriculum ideas of a kindergarten program. Developmental placement and transition room achievements were noted, as well as the relationship of classroom skills in the

fall and spring of kindergarten to second-grade achievement.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

ADED, HDED, ADAD - "Three attendance schedules for kindergarten: all-day everyday, half-day everyday, and alternate-day all-day respectively." (Oelerich: 13)

CONCERN - "Characterized by sympathy and support for academic and emotional problem." (Cunningham, Andrews: 3)

DEVELOPMENTAL PLACEMENT CONCEPT - "A concept which views the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual aspects of a child as interdependent and believes that one aspect should not be pushed ahead of the others". (May, Welch, 1985: 196)

EARLY ENTRY KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN - "Children less than 5 years and 1 month upon entering school." (Montz: 3)

FDED - "Refers to a full-day everyday kindergarten program." (Dunn: 1)

HDED - "Refers to a half-day everyday kindergarten program." (Dunn: 1)

INDIFFERENCE - "Lack of involvement due to a child failing to excite or dismay a teacher." (Cunningham, Andrews: 3)

LABELED ATTACHMENT - "Affectionate tie derived from the pleasure a child brings to a teacher." (Cunningham, Andrews: 3)

LATE ENTRY KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN - "Children greater than 5 years and 7 months upon entering school." (Montz: 3)

LEARNING STYLE - "Distinct patterns of learning-related behavior manifested in classroom settings." (McDermott: 38)

MSCA - "McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities; a test for preschoolers to assess their cognitive and motor functioning." (Funk: 181)

REJECTION - "Not being worthy of professional energies." (Cunningham, Andrews: 3)

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC - "Society's statistical study of human populations with reference to size and density, distribution, and vital statistics." (Webster: 302)

START - "Simultaneous Technique for Acuity and Readiness Testing; a developmental screening for preschoolers." (Sturner: 1)

TRANSITION ROOM - "An alternative placement for children who, at the end of their kindergarten year, lagged behind their peers in development and achievement." (Beckman, Reinart: 44)

ANNOTATIONS

FACTORS INFLUENCING KINDERGARTEN ACHIEVEMENT

PRESCHOOL INFLUENCE

Formal Preschool

Gallegos, Margaret. "Learning Academic Skills Through Play." Paper presented at the Southwest Educational Research Association (1983): 38p.

This study was conducted with 2 purposes in mind: 1) relationships between play and achievement in preschool and kindergarten children were identified; 2) a comparison was made between 2 different types of school groups - play curriculum and direct teacher instruction - to determine the skill mastery levels of children in the different environments. Forty-eight children were involved in the study, divided evenly between the 2 types of school groups. The Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Basic Skills was given as a pretest and a posttest; the pretest in the fall with the posttest following 10-12 weeks later. Basic readiness and academic skills were assessed along with levels of achievement or needs for reinforcement of a specific skill were determined through this inventory. At the preschool level, there were 14 skill sections. The play group scored additional growth gains over and above the direct instruction group in 13 areas. There were 16 skill sections for kindergarten children. At this age level, there were growth gains in the play group in 11 areas over and above those in the direct instructional group. The data gathered supported the premise that play had a significant influence on obtaining mastery of academic readiness skills. In order for heightened academic learning to take place, the inclusion of play in early childhood programs seemed to be a necessary ingredient.

Webster, Loraine. "Today's Parents Want It All for Their Preschool Children." Paper presented at the Meeting of the Northern Rocky Mountain ERA (1984): 10p.

This document described three visits to preschool classes to illustrate the academic nature of classes today. A strong movement has recently encouraged children to start formal, academic learning at an early age. In the kindergarten room observed, the traditional housekeeping, block-building, and story areas were evident, however none were used that day. Children completed a subtraction worksheet and then moved right into reading groups. A Head Start classroom was observed also where three- and four-year-old children were observed completing a worksheet using colors, shapes, and numbers plus a writing requirement of the number being studied. The third visit was to a private preschool. Here the main emphasis centered around writing an experience story and then reading it back. A survey was sent to parents with children in preschool, day-care, and Head Start programs to determine what they want their children to be taught. Results of the survey revealed that parents felt that traditional play experiences should be received by their children along with beginning reading, writing, and math skills. Positive social development was a crucial element to parents but they also wanted their children to learn necessary skills prior to entering kindergarten, a structural academic teaching environment for the preschool years.

Alternative Child-Care Arrangements

Popwell, Emma Pace. "The Preschool Nonattenders: The Relationship of Alternative Child-Care Arrangements to Kindergarten Readiness." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the America Educational Research Association (1987): 44p.

This study explored the combinations of child-care arrangements and sociodemographic characteristics and how they were associated with kindergarten readiness in relationship to formal preschool intervention programs. A sample of 579 kindergarten children with no significant preschool experience was identified and compared to kindergarten children with formal preschool instruction. A Day Care Survey was mailed to parents in order to collect information on the description and the educational diminsions of the alternative child-care arrangement used by parents during the weekdays the year prior to the child entering kindergarten. The measures used to assess kindergarten readiness were the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL) and the Ready Step Language Survey. It was found that when children were not in the conventional types of group-based child-care arrangements away from home, they were in the full-time care of the parent or guardian. This proved contrary to an earlier assumption that there was a great need for child-care due to the increased labor participation of women. Findings also indicated that certain combinations of sociodemographic characteristics and educational dimensions of the alternative child-care arrangement were associated with a high level of kindergarten readiness; and that kindergarten children with a combination of these variables demonstrated a level of readiness equal to the average for students who attended formal preschool programs.

Teacher Attitudes

Cunningham, Bruce; Andrews, David W. "The Relationship of Achievement and Peer Status to Teacher Attitudes toward Young Children." (1984): 18p.

Four distinct teacher attitudes were studied to investigate the characteristics of children that influenced these attitudes which in turn then affected student achievement. The attitudes were: 1) labeled attachment, 2) rejection, 3) concern, and 4) indifference. It was found that other factors also played a role in affecting student achievement. Differential teacher perceptions, preferences, or interpretations of children's behavior were important in determining whether there was agreement across teachers that the same children had a tendency to illicit similar attitudes in a number of teachers. The relative importance of both achievement orientation and peer relations to teacher attitudes toward young children in an open educational environment was assessed. Eighteen preschool children were observed to determine whether or not multiple teachers working with the same group of children reported similar attitude profiles for specific children. Correlations existed between teacher attitudes and the attitudes that the children had toward one another, and the relationship between the PPVT-R and the attitude inventory were consistent with the profiles of the presented children: teachers were attached to high achievers and had concern or rejected the low achievers. Peer status played a role in determining teacher attitudes along with the sociometric status of the children. It was noted that the teacher-child relationship determined at this early stage very often sets the pattern that carries over into elementary school.

Burts, Diane C. ; And-Others. "Effects of Teacher Enthusiasm on Three-and-Four-Year Old Children's Acquisition of Four Concepts." Theory and Research in Social Education 13.1 (1985): 19-29.

This study was to determine the effects of three levels of teacher enthusiasm - low, medium, and high - on three-and-four-year old children's acquisition of four concepts. The secondary purposes were to determine: a) the differential effects or interactions between age and level of teacher enthusiasm relative to concept acquisition, b) the differential effects or interactions between sex and level of enthusism relative to concept acquisition, c) the interaction effects among the levels of teacher enthusiasm, age, and sex relative to concept acquisition. Observed group behavior of the subjects in relationship with the level of teacher enthusiasm was also of interest to the researchers. It was hypothesized that there would not be any significant interactions of the preschoolers taught under the three levels of enthusiasm, but that there would be a significant difference in the task achievement of the children. Fifty-five children were studied, all of whom were attending a day-care program in a medium-sized southern city. For this study, teacher enthusiasm was not found to have an effect on the acquisition of the concepts by the preschool children, and the lack of effect was the same across age levels and sex. However, observations recorded by the teachers did seem to indicate differences in group behavior as it related to level of teacher enthusiasm. Children who were presented the lessons at a high level of enthusiasm were characterized as more attentive, interested, and responsible than subjects in the other two groups.

Various Testing Methods

Sturner, R.A.; And-Others. "Preschool Prediction of School Outcome Using START (Simultaneous Techniques for Acuity and Readiness Testing)." Paper presented at the Meeting of the Society for Behavioral Pediatrics (1986): 13p.

The goal of this research group was to explore ways in which the routine child exam might become more relevant to issues related to child development. START, a developmental screening approach, was assessed with school performance as outcome criterion. Over 1,000 rural preschool children were screened over 3 successive years. Follow-up achievement data were obtained for kindergarten, first, and second grade for Cohort 1, and at first grade only for Cohorts 2 and 3. Summary START scores were used to classify the children into low, borderline, and pass categories, which were subsequently cross-classified with the school outcome categories. Findings indicated that among the 75 children in Cohort 1 who scored low on START, 36% had poor school outcomes by kindergarten; 53% by the first grade; and 59% by the second grade. The START screening predicted about as well as the McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities and significantly better than the Stanford-Binet IQ test. Because of no diagnostic information used with START, it could not replace these tests but it served well as a screening test in pediatric practice.

Funk, Sandra G.; And-Others. "Preschool Prediction of Early School Performance: Relationship of the McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities Prior to School Entry to Achievement in Kindergarten, First, and Second Grade." Journal of School Psychology 24.2 (1986): 181-94.

The purposes were to assess the relationship of preschool MSCA testing to later school achievement and to determine its ability to identify those children at greatest risk for subsequent school problems. One hundred twenty-nine children chosen from a countrywide cohort were administered the MSCA prior to school entry. Preschool MSCA scores showed significant results obtained prior to kindergarten entry were predictive of achievement during the early elementary grades. Children who scored low on the MSCA General Cognitive Index (GCI), had significantly lower California Achievement Test scores in all grades than did children scoring within the normal range on the GCI. Recent research indicated that interventions derived from individual MSCA subtests can enhance later achievement in kindergarten.

McDermott, Paul A. "Comparitive Functions of Preschool Learning Style and IQ in Predicting Future Academic Performance." Contemporary Educational Psychology 9.1 (1984): 38-47.

This study was conducted in order to examine the relative contributions of learning style dimensions, IQ, and their interactions to the prediction of subsequent performance. One hundred kindergarten children were evaluated by teachers using the Study of Children's Learning Styles Scale and were administered the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test. Fifteen months later the children's first grade achievemnet was determined through standardized tests and teacher-assigned grades in reading, language, and mathematics. Although IQ was found the better predictor, learning styles accounted for statistically significant proportions of variability in achievement. The present research demonstrated that learning style measures enhance the predictive power of the IQ. Therefore, children's learning style did tend to compliment and/or interact with intelligence measures in ways that vary according to the nature of the achievement area being investigated.

May, Deborah C.; Welch, Edward L. "The Effects of Developmental PLacement and Early Retention on Children's Later Scores on Standarized Tests." Psychology in the Schools 21.3 (1984): 381-85.

This study examined the relationship between early school retention as a result of preschool and kindergarten developmental testing and children's later academic achievement. Two hundred twenty-three children were given the Gesell Screening Test and were coded as Traditional (TR), Overplaced (OP), or "Buy a Year." However, those children who scored as immature on the Gesell Screening Test and were retained a year according to the Gesell Developmental Placement Program, had the lowest scores on all other given measures. It had been assumed that waiting a year in a less demanding environment would have made the child ready for kindergarten or grade placement.

May, Deborah C.; Welch, Edward. "The Effects of Developmental Placement on Young Children's Cognitive and Social-Emotional Development." Early Childhood Development and Care 22.2 (1985): 195-209.

The relationship between developmental placement as a result of preschool and kindergarten developmental testing and children's later cognitive achievement and social-emotional growth was examined. Two hundred twenty-three children were coded as Traditional (TR), Overplaced (OP), or "Buy a Year," (BAY), depending on Gesell Screening Test scores and subsequent school placement. This developmental concept viewed the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual aspects of a child as interdependent and believed that one aspect should not be pushed ahead of the others. It was their philosphy that a child does better in school if started and promoted on the basis of developmental age. However, it was found that immature children, even when developmentally placed or retained early in school, maintained lower levels of achievement throughout their elementary school years. Time alone did not seem to remedy the learning problems connected with immaturity. Being overplaced with traditional children did not harm the children or negatively influence their attitudes or performance nor were there any demonstratable positive effects of buying a year on children's later academic achievement.

Early Entry

Dietz,Carol ; Wilson,Barry J. "The Beginning School Age and Academic Achievement." Psychology in the Schools 22.1 (1985): 93-94.

This study was conducted to determine the effects of beginning school age and gender on later retention in grade and later school achievement. It was found that no significant differences among the three age groups of kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 4th grade were noted. There were differences in achievement between boys and girls. Results obtained on readiness tests showed no differences among age groups or between boys and girls; no significant differences were noted among age groups for 2nd grade ITBS reading, math, and composite scores, but boys scored lower than girls in reading and had lower composite scores; only significant differences in composite scores were noted at the 4th grade level with boys scoring slightly lower than girls. Retention results indicated that students were a range of ages, not only in the youngest group. The study concluded that there is little or no effect on academic achievement that can be attributed to the birthday of a child. It was suggested that educators should reevaluate their premise of delaying a child's entry in school solely on birth date and gender.

Montz,Lesteen Tina Richardson; "Academic Achievement Among Early Entry Students." (1985): 29p.

This paper reported a study of the effect of entrance age on school success. To explore the conflicting views concerning entrance age and further success, an investigation compared academic achievement at the third grade level of 20 early and 20 late entry kindergarten children. A statistically significant difference was found between "early entry" students and "late entry" students in academic achievement based on the ITBS. The "late entry" children scored higher than those who had entered kindergarten early. The study did not find a statistically significant difference between the gender of the students and their academic achievement. In addition, findings revealed that 61% of the children who were retained in elementary or placed in modified primary classes were within the early entrance group at the time of admission to kindergarten. The research indicated there was a problem among the "early entry" children in reaching their academic potential.
Early Entry = < 5.1 years when entering kindergarten
Late Entry = > 5.7 years when entering kindergarten

Hilderbrand, John A. ; And-Others. "Evaluation of Early Entrance to Kindergarten and Handwriting and Reading Comprehension: Three Studies." Florida Educational Research and Development Council Research Bulletin. (1983): 60p.

In this study, teachers were asked to rate early entrance students' performance in their respective classes. Teachers rated 486 first-grade and 154 kindergarten children whose entrance test results had permitted them to enter kindergarten a year earlier than other students with birthdays between October and January. Results suggested that the early entrance program be discontinued because of average performance by early entrants (only 58% were seen as performing as expected). Also, there were possible negative effects on those children who failed the exam. Also the possible effect of junior and senior high school on early entrance students is unknown.

PARENTAL INFLUENCE

Maternal Involvement

Lopez, Linda C. ; Holmes, William M. "Maternal Involvement and Academic Success for Kindergarten Pupils." Reading Improvement 20.4 (1983): 248-51.

This study dealt with 115 kindergarten children. It examined the relationship between maternal involvement and teachers' ratings of academic skills. It compared the potential impact of several different maternal involvement behaviors occurring in an everyday setting on teachers' perceptions of academic performance. The hypothesis regarding parent involvement was not confirmed in this study. Only one significant relationship was found. Maternal help with sight words was associated with children who had difficulty with reading. More replication is needed, however, these findings indicate that maternal involvement occurring in an everyday setting is not related to academic achievement.

Home and School Relationships

Martin-Huff, Ellen M. "The Relationship between Parental Attitudes about Education and Children's Early Adjustment to Kindergarten." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (1984): 11p.

The purpose of this study was to investigate: 1) the relationship between mothers' and fathers' attitudes about education at the time of their children's kindergarten entry, 2) the relationship between these parent attitudes and children's adjustment to kindergarten. The children studied were drawn from four suburban elementary schools in a large metropolitan area in Ohio. Two instruments were used in this study, the Parent Attitude Toward Education Scale was used to assess parents' attitudes about the importance of education and their confidence in the quality of the schools, and the First Grade Adjustment Scale was used by all classroom teachers to rate their students' adjustment to their first elementary school experience. The mean scores on the parents' assessment indicated that as their children began school, parents valued education and were confident that the schools would do a good job of educating their children. If the families were experiencing stress during their children's school entry, it did not seem to lower their opinions of education. It was found that only mothers' attitudes were related to children's school adjustment, but to only two specific areas - physical and intellectual abilities. No significant relationships were found between fathers' attitudes and children's adjustment scores.

Hess, Robert D. ; And-Others. "Maternal Variables as Predictors of Children's School Readiness and Later Achievement in Vocabulary and Mathematics in Sixth Grade." Child Development 55.5 (1984): 1902-12.

Three issues were examined in the purpose of this study: 1) identify aspects of maternal behavior and the home that are associated with school achievement, 2) determine if maternal variables that correlate with children's performance during preschool years also correlate with achievement in middle grades of school, and 3) whether maternal variables were associated with school achievement after maternal IQ and child performance measured during the preschool years were taken into account. Sixty-seven families participated in the initial study for preschool and 47 participated in the follow-up study for sixth graders. The pattern which evolved fit that of a number of studies of the effects of teacher behavior on student achievement - no single instructional variable was dominant in producing discernable increments in performance. It was suggested that within the interaction of normal families, essential ingredients for a child's cognitive growth and achievement may be found in several types of maternal behavior. The mother's influence on children's achievement in school appeared to be most effective during the preschool years in preparing for school rather than with ITBS scores from children at the sixth grade level.

Morrow, Lesley Mandel. "Home and School Correlates of Early Interest in Literature." Journal of Educational Research 76.4 (1983): 221-30.

This study was conducted to assess kindergarten children's interest in reading. Information about their home and school environment was collected. The study was successful in developing a composite measure to identify children who have a high or low interest in reading. However, many other variables would need to be addressed in future research. The findings of the study suggested that the home exerted a strong influence upon the children's interest in literature from the time they were very young. Many factors worked together to create this interest. Teachers also played an important role in establishing this interest in reading. It was found that cooperative efforts were needed between the home and school to create a systematic, integrated program for developing recreational readers.

Ramano, Maria. "Parental Participation in Early Language Development." M.A. Thesis (1984): 32p.

A study was conducted to determine what specific activities parents most frequently engage in with children in order to develop language in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first and second grade age levels. A questionaire of language related activities was developed consisting of general information regarding the parents and the child, followed by 15 statements which parents checked according to the frequency with which the activity occurred at home. The majority of parents did interact in language development activities with their child on a daily basis. Verbal interaction activities were the most common type of parent-child language related activities, followed by activities that required learning tools and prolonged attention of the parents. It was found that the acquisition of language provides the foundation for future learning abilities.

KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULING

Kindergarten Offerings

Robinson, Sandra L. "The State of Kindergarten Offerings in the United States." Childhood Education 64.1 (1987): 23-28.

This article gave the results of survey concerning the state of kindergarten program offerings in the United States. Similarities included that all children should be offered the opportunity to attend kindergarten and the hiring of kindergarten teachers with college degrees. Differences were also indicated by this survey. These included the length of the kindergarten day, the age upon entering kindergarten, and whether attendance at kindergarten should be compulsory. One question on the survey required a "judgement call" on the part of state leaders: "What is the major purpose of your state's kindergarten program?" (Robinson, 1987, p.24). A "balanced program" was the overall choice of state department leaders.

Full-Day Everyday - Nonsupportive

Evan, Ellis D. ; Marken, Dan. "Longitudinal Follow-up Comparison of Conventional and Extended-Day Public School Kindergarten Programs." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (1983): 40p.

The cumulative, long term impact of alternative kindergarten scheduling for everyday half- and full-day programs was examined for three successive cohorts of children. The dependent measures included academic achievement, school sentiment, personal-social behavior, school attendance, and referral to special education classes. Parent perception was also assessed of the kindergarten programs. It was hypothesized that increased time, opportunity, and teacher supervision would result in greater general educational benefits for full-day kindergarten children. The California Achievement Test, Early Childhood School Sentiment Scale, teacher ratings of personal-social classroom behavior, and teacher rating scale on attitude toward reading were used as a multi-method approach to test the theory that greater cognitive and affective advantages accrue for children in extended day kindergarten because of increased instructional, rehearsal, and exploratory time. No main program differences, excepting reading, were revealed by this study. Reading attitudes favored HDED. Contrary to prediction, reading achievement was unaffected. No strong empirical argument emerged to favor either approach to kindergarten scheduling; no achievement differences were observed.

Dunn, Gregory E. "Community Schools Kindergarten Scheduling Study." Grant Wood Area Education (1987): 31p.

The purpose of this study was to determine if change from a half-day everyday (HDED kindergarten program to a full-day everyday (FDED) kindergarten would result in significant differences in achievement. Data was collected on children upon entry to kindergarten, the end of kindergarten, the spring of first grade, and the fall of second grade. It was hypothesized that the FDED program would allow more learning opportunities, doubling the amount of time a student spent in school should better prepare them for school years to come. Results of testing indicated no significant differences between the two programs at the end of the kindergarten year. Subsequent findings concerning first and second grade students indicted that their scores became more different from each other both between the years within a program and between the two programs.

Robertson, Linda F. "Why We Went Back to Half Days." Principal 64.2 (1984): 22-24.

This article reviewed the switch of kindergarten schedules from half-day everyday to full-day alternate-day arrangement in Ohio. It was found that no real differences occurred between the two schedules in terms of academic achievement or classroom social and emotional behavior. Other factors such as socioeconomic conditions, financial strictures, and teacher and community attitudes should be considered. It was concluded then that the biggest mistake was trying to sell kindergarten schedules as a money saver; there was more to be considered in changing a proven system than statistical data.

Gullo, Dominic F. ; Clements, Douglas H. "The Effects of Kindergarten Schedule on Achievement, Classroom Behavior, and Attendance." Journal of Education Research 78.1 (1984): 221-30.

Gullo's study was conducted to compare the effects of two different kindergarten schedules: half-day everyday and full-day alternate-day. Those factors taken into account were achievement, classroom behavior, and attendance. There were no significant differences found in academic achievement levels as measured by the Metropolitan Readiness Test or on attendance data. The Hahnemann School Behavior Rating Scale was administered finding only significant differences in originality and independent learning. Possible reasons for these differences were discussed, perceptions of the two schedules, and implications of the results for kindergarten scheduling were addressed for the two groups of children compared.

Full-Day - Supportive

Anderson, Eleanor V. "Comparing Full-Day and Half-Day Kindergartens." Spectrum 3.1 (1985): 3-10.

This paper compared the effects of full- and half-day kindergarten programs in Southern California. Sixty children were enrolled in the experimental kindergarten classes. The full-day program found that: 1) these children showed no signs of fatique during the afternoon of the extended day program, 2) differences in teacher expectations were apparent and had considerable impact on student outcomes, 3) teachers believed that the longer period of instruction was in the best interests of their kindergarten students and the added time facilitated better preparation for first grade. Evidence provided that the extended-day program promoted acquisition of skills and knowledge, enhanced self-confidence independence, and cooperation, and convinced the community of the district administration's serious intent to strengthen the elementary school curriculum.

Oelerich, Majorie. "Should Kindergarten Children Attend School All Day Every Day?" The Journal of the College of Education Fall (1984): 5p.

This report discussed the results of research conducted over a 10 year period which compared three attendance patterns: all-day everyday (ADED), half-day everyday (HDED), all-day alternate-day (ADAD), in rural southern Minnesota. For the children in this district, based on research findings, it appeared that the ADED kindergarten attendance pattern was superior to the HDED or the ADAD program. Of the latter two, the HDED program resulted in higher performance for children than did the ADAD program.

Helmich, Edith. "Kindergarten Schedules: Status of Patterns in Illinois and a Review of Research." Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield Dept. of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (1985): 22p.

This report identified and defined the different types of kindergarten schedules being used in Illinois school districts and reviewed the research to identify the effects that different types of schedules have on student outcomes; particularly those related to achievement or readiness measures. It has been questioned whether half-day kindergarten schedules were adequate enough to prepare children for the first grade. The three schedules referred to in the report are half-day, full-day, and alternate-day. In the summary, districts administrators reported adopting the full-day schedule for one or more of three reasons: 1) to meet the needs of disadvantaged or readiness deficient students who can benefit from the extra support to prepare them for first grade, 2) to provide an enrichment program for advanced or gifted children who are ready for a more advanced program, and 3) to reduce transportation costs. There was little or no difference in the academic or social outcomes between children who attended the half-day programs and those who attended the alternate-day programs. The alternate-day schedule did not have a measurable positive effect on academic or social achievement, but neither did it have a detrimental effect when compared to the half-day schedule.

Gullo, Dominic F. ; And-Others. "A Comparative Study of "All-Day," "Alternate-Day," and "Half-Day" Kindergarten Schedules: Effects on Achievement and Classroom Social Behaviors." Journal of Research in Childhood Education 1.2 (1986): 87-94.

The study was conducted to compare the relative effects of three different kindergarten schedules on children's end-of-the-year achievement and prosocial classroom behavior (as rated by the teachers). It was designed to offset any limitations in the following ways: 1) all three scheduling formats were directly compared on the same variables; 2) children were randomly selected from a variety of settings to control for teacher, curriculum, and environmental factors; 3) children were pretested in order to determine entry level development; 4) all the school districts were experienced in using the schedule they were using at the time of the study. Subjects included 82 children attending "all-day" kindergarten, 79 children attending "alternate-day" kindergarten, and 55 children attending "half-day" kindergarten. There were no significant differences found in the three groups on a test of entry level development. The findings of the study indicated that there were no end-of-the-year achievement differences as measured by the Metropolitan Reading Test between the "half-day" and the "alternate-day" groups of children, however, the children in the "all-day" group scored significantly higher on the MRT composite achievement score compared to the other two groups. Teachers rated their children in the "alternate-day" group as exhibiting greater negative behaviors on the Hahnemann Elementary Behavior Rating Scale.

Humphrey, Jack W. "A Comparison of Full-Day and Half-Day Kindergartens." Spectrum 1.2 (1983): 11-16.

A comparative follow-up study was conducted to assess the long-term benefits of full-day versus half-day kindergarten programs as children entered higher grades in school - third and fourth grade. A study was conducted in 1980 with children from 4 schools in Evansville, Indiana who attended full-day kindergarten programs (in the 78-79 and 79-80 school year) comparing them to children in four other schools who attended half-day kindergarten programs. It indicated that full-day kindergarten children scored significantly higher than half-day kindergarten children in all areas of readiness testing. The purpose of this study then was to discover whether the effects of the full-day kindergarten program continued as the students entered third and fourth grade. The effects were as follows: full-day kindergarten children had higher self-concept scores than did half-day kindergarten children; there were no overall differences in school attitudes between the two groups; there were consistently higher percentage of satisfactory marks with full-day kindergarten students; full-day students received higher conduct marks; higher percentage of retention from half-day students; vocabulary and comprehension scores significantly higher for children who had attended full-day kindergarten; full-day students had higher scores on basic skills' testing; children, primary teachers, and parents had positive attitudes about the full-day programs. It was concluded that the effects on children who attended full-day programs were lasting.

Tephly, Joan. "Young Children's Recall in Every-day and Alternate-Day School Schedules." Child Study Journal 15.4 (1985): 283-92.

This study was to investigate how much information young children would forget within differing time intervals and to determine whether children already in an alternate-day attendance pattern would demonstrate greater recall skills across longer time intervals. Sixty-three children were randomly grouped, presented a lesson, and interviewed either 1, 2 or 5 days later. The children were both prekindergarten and kindergarten age and were attending either a daily or an alternate-day program. Three standardized tests, administered during the period of study, were found to correlate with children's recall ability. Other results revealed a drop in recall between children interviewed one day later and children interviewed two days later. Children interviewed five days later performed better than the two-day group on initial recall of lesson components, but not on recall of details. Forgetting did occur and, in general, increased with time.

CURRICULUM

Developmental Placement

Jaworski, Anne Porter ; Riley, Stephanie Mueller. "When Curriculum Does Not Match Readiness." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (1985): 8p.

This study evaluated the long-term effects of developmental placement. Five hundred children from a variety of school settings were divided into 3 groups: 1) children recommended for a "growth year" before kindergarten who followed the recommendation delaying entry to kindergarten for 1 year; 2) children similarly recommended but did not follow the recommendation, thus entering kindergarten at the expected chronological age; 3) a control group of randomly selected classmates. The reason given for utilizing a "growth year" was that research has indicated that a group of children at five years of age chronologically can normally deviate as much as 12 months developmentally with respect to maturation. Developmental placement offered more flexibility amd possibilities for individualization in the progression through grade levels. Through questionaires given to parents, teachers, and children, information was covered concerning school adjustment, school achievement, and self-esteem. Parents indicated they agreed with the developmental program and made the right decision.

Hertz, Rae. "A Program of Curriculum Oriented Directed Play to Enhance Developmental Maturity in Kindergarten Children." Practicum Report (1984): 82p.

The program goal of this study involved the providing of a developmental kindergarten program. To increase the maturity of a least one developmental behavior in each child by at least 80% was the major concern of program initiates. Curriculum-oriented directed play was chosen as the solution to the problem, with judgements of maturity made on the basis of questionaire responses by teachers, parents, and teacher aides. Two periods of imaginative sociodramatic play was adjusted into the daily kindergarten curriculum. Children were tested upon entrance into kindergarten and placed in 1 of 3 instructional programs: 1) Preventive - current or potential learning problems, 2) Developmental - performing as expected for age and grade, 3) Enrichment - those demonstrating unusual promise or creativity. The goal for the program was surpassed with 90% of all respondents to the questionaire indicating behavioral growth on at least one item. It can be concluded that a curriculum-oriented socio-dramatic play enhanced the maturity of developmentally younger children. This type of kindergarten program reduced behavior problems and improved the quality of the educational environment.

Transition Room and Classroom Skills

Beckman, Vernal ; Reinart, Lori. "Evaluation of a Kindergarten to First Grade Transition Room." Spectrum 3.2 (1985): 44-46.

This study was to assess the academic impact on students in a transition room. It was designed to determine: 1) if there was a significant difference in the mean scores of a pretest and posttest on the Boehm Test of Basic Concept for students in kindergarten, transition room, and grade 1, 2) whether there was a significant difference in the mean scores of the Metropolitan Readiness Test for students in kindergarten, transition room, and grade 1. Three groups of children (35 total) were involved in the study: group 1 - 11 kindergarten students chosen randomly among those repeating kindergarten; group 2 - 12 children in the transition room; group 3 - 12 children randomly selected from those who had barely passed kindergarten but who had been promoted on to first grade. It was determined that all 3 groups made significant gains on the Boehm test; however, the MRT showed no significant differences in the groups' mean scores. Sufficient evidence was not available to support the contention that students in a transition room have higher academic performance than their peers who are in a normal setting.

Swartz, Janet P. ; Walker, Deborah Klein. "The Relationship between Teacher Ratings of Kindergarten Classroom Skills and Second Grade Achievement Scores: An Analysis of Gender Differences." Journal of School Psychology 22.2 (1984): 209-17.

This study used the Kindergarten Performance Profile, a criterion-referenced teacher rating scale, to analyze the social and work skill areas focusing on the relationship of classroom skills in the fall and spring of kindergarten to second-grade achievement scores. In the fall of kindergarten, more boys than girls were rated as having immature social and work skills; however, the girls who did demonstrate difficulties in kindergarten, performed more poorly than their male peers by grade 2. Kindergarten work skills were significantly related to California Achievement Test scores for both boys and girls; however, social skills were related to achievement scores for girls only. Teacher ratings in the spring and fall were predictive of achievement test scores for girls; spring evaluations were more strongly related to boys' later achievement.

SUMMARY

Reserach indicated that a strong movement has recently encouraged children starting formal, academic learning at an early age. Parents revealed that traditional play experiences should be received by their children along with beginning reading, writing, and math skills. Authors Webster and Gallegos supported the premise that play had significant influence on obtaining mastery of academic readiness skills. In order for heightened academic learning to take place, the inclusion of play in a preschool or early childhood program was a necessary ingredient. Webster found that positive social development, coming through play, was a crucial element, but they also wanted their children to learn necessary skills prior to entering kindergarten. Parents wanted a structured, academic teaching environment for the preschool years. Popwell's study of alternative child-care indicated that certain combinations of sociodemographic characteristics and the educational dimensions of alternative child-care arrangements were associated with a high level of kindergarten readiness. Kindergarten children with a combination of these variables demonstrated a level of readiness equal to the average for students within the same school who attended the formal preschool programs described by Webster and Gallegos.

It has been found that teacher attidudes and level of enthusiasm during a presentation affected student achievement. Cunningham studied four distinct teacher

attitudes and investigated the characteristics of children that influenced these attitudes. Teachers were attached to high achievers and had concern for or rejected the low achievers. The teacher-child relationship determined at the preschool level very often sets the pattern that carries over into elementary school. Burts reported that teacher enthusiasm also had an effect on how well children acquired concepts; high level enthusiasm in turn created more attentive children who achieved the intended concept.

There were several methods of testing for readiness skills and acuity. Sturner used a developmental screening approach, START, the Simultaneous Technique for Acuity and Readiness Testing. He proposed that because no diagnostic information was obtained using START, it could not replace the Stanford-Binet IQ test or the McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities. It did, however, serve well as a screening test in pediatric practice. Funk used the McCarthy Scales of Children's Abilities and found that the significant results obtained prior to kindergarten entry were predictive of achievement during the early elementary grades. It was indicated that interventions derived from individual MSCA subtests can enhance later achievement in kindergarten. McDermott used an entirely different approach and reported on the learning style dimensions of children as predictions of later achievement. IQ was found the better predictor in this study, although learning styles accounted for statistically significant proportions of variability in

achievement. Developmental placement as a result of preschool developmental testing was discussed at length by May and Welch. In two of their studies, early school retention and children's later cognitive achievement and social-emotional growth were examined. In both studies it was proposed that preschool developmental testing would result in better achievement scores if the children were placed according to their developmental scores. It was found that immature children, even when developmentally placed or retained early in school, maintained lower levels of achievement throughout their elementary school years. Time alone did not remedy the learning problems connected with immaturity. Hilderbrand and Montz supported the view that there was a problem among the "early entry" children in reaching their academic potential. Dietz proposed as a result of her study, that there is little or no effect on academic achievement that can be attributed to the birthday of a child.

The relationship between maternal involvement and later achivement was examined. Parents' attitudes about education, language development, reading interest, and early adjustment to kindergarten were studied. Lopez addressed the hypothesis that parent involvement and teachers' ratings of academic skills would be significantly related. However, it was found that only one significant relationship existed: maternal help with sight words was associated with children who had difficulty reading. Maternal help occurring in an everyday

setting was not related to academic achievement. It was found in Martin-Huff's research that only mothers' attitudes were related to children's school adjustment, but to only two specific areas: physical and intellectual abilities. No specific relationships were found between fathers' attitudes and children's adjustment to kindergarten. Hess supported the evidence that within the interaction of normal families, essential ingredients for a child's cognitive growth and achievement may be found in several types of maternal behavior. The mother's influence on children's achievement in school appeared to be most effective during the preschool years in preparation for school,rather than with achievement test scores from later elementary school. An interest in reading was assessed by Morrow. The findings of the study did suggest that the home environment exerted a strong influence upon children's interest in literature from the time they were very young, however, many factors working together were needed to create and develop a recreational reader. Romano researched the relationship of language development activities engaged in in the home and future learning abilities. It was found that parents did interact in language activities with their child on a daily basis, with verbal interaction being the most common type of parent-child language activity. It was found that the acquisition of language provides the foundation for future learning abilities.

It has questioned whether half-day kindergarten

schedules were adequate enough to prepare children for the first grade. Three schedules, half-day everyday, full-day everyday, and full-day alternate-day, have been extensively researched. The cumulative, long-term impact of everyday half- and full-day kindergarten scheduling was examined by Evan. It was hypothesized that increased time, opportunity, and teacher supervision would result in greater general educational benefits for full-day kindergarten students. A multi-method approach was used to test this theory. No empirical argument emerged to favor either approach to kindergarten scheduling, no achievement differences were observed. Dunn also conducted a study to determine if change from a half-day everyday program to a full-day everyday program would result in significant differences in achievement. It was hypothesized that the FDED program would allow more learning time; thus better preparation for school years to come. No indication of significant differences between the two programs at the end of the kindergarten year was found. Robertson and Gullo (1984) studies compared the effects of changing from a half-day everyday schedule to a full-day alternate-day schedule. It was found that no significant differences occurred between the two schedules in terms of academic achievement or classroom social and emotional behaviors.

Anderson, Humphrey, Oelerich, Gullo (1986), and Hemlich supported the evidence that children who attended kindergarten full-day everyday did in fact have an academic

achievement advantage over those children attending alternative kindergarten schedules. Anderson compared the effects of full- and half-day kindergarten programs in Southern California. The full-day program promoted acquisition of skills and knowledge and enhanced self-confidence, independence, and cooperation. Hemlich's report identified and defined the different types of kindergarten schedules being used in Illinois school districts. It reviewed the research to identify the effects that the different types of schedules have on student outcomes, particularly those related to achievement or readiness measures. A full-day schedule was adopted by district administrators of Illinois to meet the needs of the readiness deficient students and to provide an enrichment program for the gifted students, and to reduce transportation costs. In rural, southern Minnesota, Oelerich's report discussed the results of research conducted over a ten year period, comparing the three different attendance patterns: HDED, FDED, FDAD. The FDED program was found to be the superior attendance kindergarten schedule. In Gullo's 1986 study, the relative effects of the three different kindergarten schedules on children's end-of-the-year achievement and prosocial classroom behavior (as rated by the teachers) were compared. The Metropolitan Readiness Test was given at the end-of-the-year with no significant achievement differences between the HDED and FDAD groups of children, however, the children in the FDED program had a significantly

higher conposite score compared to the other two groups. Teachers rated their children in the FDAD group as exhibiting greater negative behaviors on the Hahnemann Elementary Behavior Rating Scale. Humphrey conducted a comparative follow-up study to assess the long-term benefits of full-day versus half-day kindergarten programs as children entered third or fourth grade. The full-day kindergarten children scored significantly higher in all areas of readiness testing. The long-term effects were: higher self-concept scores; consistently higher grades; higher conduct marks; vocabulary and comprehension scores were significantly higher; basic skills testing had higher scores; and children, primary teachers, and parents had positive attitudes about the full-day program.

The curriculum of the kindergarten program can have an effect on achievement as indicated by research. Jaworski and Riley, and Hertz evaluated the long-term effects of providing a developmental placement kindergarten program. Developmental placement offered more flexibility and possibilities for the individualization in the progression through grade levels. Hertz conducted a study which chose curriculum-oriented play as the solution to the problem of placing the immature child. The program was successful with 90% of the children showing at least one item of behavioral growth. This type of program reduced behavior problems and improved the quality of the educational environment.

Beckman conducted a study to assess the academic impact

on children in a transition room. Children in kindergarten, the transition room, and grade one were administered the Boehm Test of Basic Concepts and the Metropolitan Readiness Test. All three groups made significant gains on the basic skills test, however, the MRT showed no significant difference in the groups' mean scores. That students in a transition room had higher academic performances than their peers was not supported by the evidence.

Swartz analyzed the social and the work skill areas focusing on the relationship of classroom skills in the fall and spring of kindergarten to second-grade achievement scores. Kindergarten work skills were significantly related to California Achievement Test scores for both boys and girls.

CONCLUSION

It was concluded from such authors as Webster, Gallegos, and Popwell that children did benefit from preschool programs and alternative child-care in relationship to kindergarten readiness skills and later achievement. The data of Sturner, Funk, and McDermott lent strong support to preschool programs and alternative child-care in the way of readiness skill testing as predictions of achievement in a kindergarten program. Developmental placement was reviewed by May and Welch. Their proposal of placing children according to their preschool developmental testing scores resulting in better school achievement was disproved. Immature children carried lower levels of achievement throughout their school years regardless of their earlier placement according to developmental age.

The relationship between parental involvement and later achievement was examined by several authors. It was concluded from such authors as Lopez, Martin-Huff, and Hess that only mothers' attitudes were related to children's school adjustment and the mother's influence on children's achievement in school appeared to be most effective during the preschool years. Morrow and Romano determined that the home did exert a strong influence upon children's interest in literature and language development.

Kindergarten schedules, HDED, FDED, FDAD, have been extensively researched. The data of Evan, Dunn, Robertson, and Gullo (1984) concluded that no significant differences

were found in achievement between the schedules of HDED and FDED and between HDED and FDAD. Later studies by authors Anderson, Humphrey, Oelerich, Hemlich, and Gullo (1986) supported the evidence that children who attended kindergarten full-day everyday did in fact have an academic achievement advantage over those children attending alternative kindergarten schedules. Other skills such as enhanced self-confidence. independence, cooperation, and prosocial classroom behavior were supportive of the full-day kindergarten program. Gullo (1986) further explored the long-term effects of the full-day kindergarten schedule and found that children that had experienced full-day kindergarten had consistently higher grades and conduct marks, basic skills testing had higher scores, and children, parents, and primary teachers had positive attitudes about the full-day program.

Areas of curriculum were researched by several authors. Jaworski, Riley, and Hertz evaluated the effects of providing a developmental placement kindergarten program. A developmentally based curriculum offered flexibility and possibilities for the individualization in the progression through grade levels. Curriculum-oriented directed play reduced behavior problems and improved the quality of the educational environment. Higher academic performances were not supported in Beckman's study of a transition room for children not ready to move on into first grade. In the tests given, Boehm Test of Basic Concepts and the Metropolitan

Readiness Test, all groups of children being studied made significant gains, showing no significant differences in the groups' mean scores. Children in the transition room did not have higher performance scores than their peers who were in either a kindergarten or normal first grade setting. Swartz conducted a study analyzing social and work skill areas focusing on the relationship of classroom skills in the fall and spring of kindergarten to second-grade achievement scores. It was concluded that the teacher-rated skills were predictive of achievement test scores for girls, but only spring evaluations were predictive for boys' later achievement scores.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1) Preschool programs and alternative child-care programs should be carefully reviewed by parents before making a decision about which type of curriculum their child would gain the most beneficial and helpful readiness skills in preparation for kindergarten. Parents should be aware of the program's curriculum, testing methods, and placement procedures for kindergarten.

2) School administrators and teachers take into consideration all of the factors a change in kindergarten scheduling may bring. Factors such as socioeconomic conditions, financial strictures, and teacher and community attitudes should be considered when planning a change.

3) Teachers be keenly aware of their kindergarten childrens' stages of development to plan a curriculum that can be helpful for all children. Children chronologically at five years of age can normally deviate as much as twelve months developmentally. Total classroom curriculum then must meet the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive needs of all the children.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Some discrepancies are apparent, especially with the area of kindergarten scheduling. Various results were obtained possibly due to four limitations: 1) scheduling formats were not directly compared on the same variables; 2) children were not randomly selected from various settings of environmental and curriculum areas; 3) children were not pretested to determine entry level development; and, 4) the school districts were not familiar with using the particular schedule at the time of the study. When study procedures avoided these limitations, agreement emerges among the authors that a full-day everyday kindergarten schedule did have a significant difference in the area of kindergarten achievement.

The amount of parental influence on achievement is difficult to measure. Other factors which conflict with the findings concern television viewing, educational background of the family, number in the family, and socioeconomic status of the family.

Other discrepancies are apparent in the area of developmental placement. Different writers had conflicting evidence of the value fo developmental placement for kindergarten children. However, parents of children who had been developmentally placed in a "buy a year" program before entering a regular kindergarten class, felt they had made the right choice.

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